CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Vieux Carré Commission

Guidelines for Roofing

ROOFS

A building's roof provides the first line of defense against the elements while its design greatly affects its overall appearance. Therefore, the following functional and aesthetic concerns should be evaluated when considering new roof construction, replacement and/or alteration:

- Weather-tight roofing preserves a building and provides shelter from storm water, wind and sun
- Roofing helps define the building's character, silhouette and architectural style
- Roofing form, color, texture and associated features affect the scale and massing of a building
- Roofing variations add visual interest to the streetscape
- A new roofing feature and/or accessory may detract from a roof's character and appearance

SECTION INDEX

The Vieux Carré Commission (VCC) reviews all roof form modifications, materials and features. This section includes:

- Historic Character of Roof Forms; Roof Pitch & Materials – 04-2
- Historic Roofing Materials; Contemporary Roofing Materials; Slate – 04-3
- Tile – 04-4
- Metal – 04-5
- Asbestos; Flat Roofing Systems – 04-6
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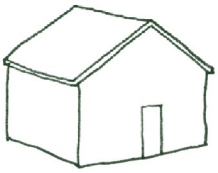
All applicants must obtain a Vieux Carré Commission (VCC) permit as well as all other necessary City permits prior to proceeding with any work. Reviewing and becoming familiar with these *Guidelines* during the early stages of a project can assist in moving a project quickly through the permit approval process, saving an applicant both time and money. Staff review of all details is required to ensure proposed work is appropriate to a specific property.

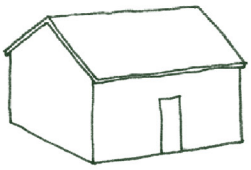
Guidelines addressing additional historic property topics are available at the VCC office and on its website at www.nola.gov/vcc. For more information, to clarify whether a proposed project requires VCC review, or to obtain a property rating of significance or a permit application, contact the VCC at (504) 658-1420.

The first step in using these *Guidelines* is to understand a property's color rating. The rating corresponds to the historical and/or architectural significance and then determines what type of change will be permitted and the review process required for each property under the jurisdiction of the VCC.

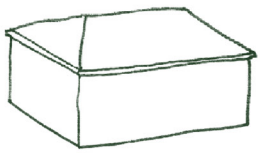
Review boxes provided throughout the *Guidelines* indicate the lowest level of review required for the specified work. Staff can forward any application to the Architectural Committee (AC) and/or the Commission for further consideration.



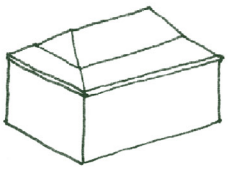
Front Gable



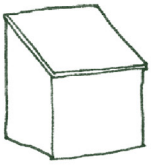
Side Gable



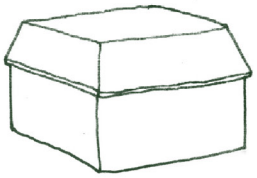
Hipped



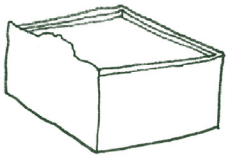
Double Pitched



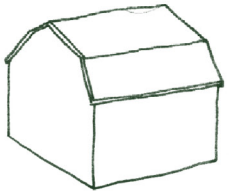
Shed



Mansard



Flat (Low-sloped) with Parapet



Gambrel

HISTORIC CHARACTER OF ROOF FORMS

The historic form of a roof is critical to understanding of a building's type and architectural style. For example, a Creole cottage typically has a hipped or side gable roof form while a shed roof tends to be limited to rear ells, service buildings and sheds. Alteration of a roof's shape can have a negative impact on a building's appearance and historic authenticity, and potentially lead to a drainage problem or water infiltration. A roof form can have various pitches and be combined in different manners to provide numerous roof types. Some of the most common roof forms found in the French Quarter are illustrated above.

ROOF PITCH & MATERIALS

The pitch or slope of a roof is linked to the building type and architectural style, and defines the functionally appropriate materials for the roof. Low-pitched to flat roofs depend on a continuous or nearly continuous roof surface to minimize moisture infiltration. Moderately to steeply sloped roofs can include unit materials such as slate and clay tile. (Refer to *Historic Roofing Materials* and *Contemporary Roofing Materials,* page 04-3.)

Roof Form Review	
Minor change to a secondary building less than 50 years old	
1	Architectural Committee
2 3	Staff
Minor change to a secondary building; flat or low-sloped roof	
1 2	Architectural Committee
3	Staff
Alteration of a roof form including the addition of a dormer without evidence of prior existence	
1	Commission
2 3	Architectural Committee

ROOF SYSTEMS & STORM PREPAREDNESS

Some of the greatest damage to a building during a major storm, such as a tropical storm or a hurricane, generally occurs as a result of high winds that compromise the roof system by uplift, causing the entire roof to blow off or components such as slates to blow off. Although some preventative measures may be taken to an existing roof system, some improvements cannot be completed unless a new roof is installed or an existing roof is replaced.

Storm preparedness options for a roof includes:

- Adding bracing or additional structural elements to roof framing and gable ends – *Consultation with an architect or engineer might be required*
- Strengthening connections between roof framing elements using hurricane straps, clips, sheathing, attachments, etc. – *Consultation with an architect or engineer might be required*
- Installing a secondary roofing system such as self-adhered roofing applied to plywood under slate, tile or metal roofing in the event the primary roof is damaged – *Verify material installation requirements for primary roofing*
- Sealing and protecting skylights, monitors, cupolas and roof vents, including gable-end vents, prior to the storm to minimize impact, wind-driven rain and uplift damage
- Repointing chimneys and securing tile roofing, ridge tiles, cresting and finials with mortar
- Installing metal roofing and flashing with double-lock seams and edges and closely spaced, high-strength fasteners
- Fastening gutters and downspouts securely to the building
- Avoiding use of gravel or other loose materials on a rooftop that could become airborne during a storm
- Reviewing the underside of a roof from the attic for signs of moisture or daylight indicating a potential crack or hole, paying particular attention at roof penetrations such as a chimney (Refer to *Interior Checklist, Guidelines for Exterior Maintenance,* page 03-13)

HISTORIC ROOFING MATERIALS

Historically, roofing materials were selected based upon aesthetic and practical criteria, including pitch, weather conditions and availability of materials and craftsmen. Prior to the French Quarter fires of 1788 and 1794, roofing was primarily wood shingles. After the fires, to meet new Spanish building requirements, new building roofs and replacement roofs were constructed with terra cotta (clay) tiles, and later with slate. Each material provides a specific color, texture and pattern to a roof surface. Terra cotta and slate provide a modulated surface with variations in color, shadow lines, texture, veining and thickness. Decorative slate shingles were also used, particularly in the Victorian period during the second half of the 19th century, to add additional color or pattern to a roof surface.

With industrialization at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, new roofing materials were introduced, including metal roofing, asbestos and asphalt-based shingles, concrete tile, as well as varieties of rolled or built-up roofing for a flat installation. As time progressed, the variety of metal roofing was expanded to include copper, galvanized sheet steel and aluminum.

CONTEMPORARY ROOFING MATERIALS

Since the second half of the 20th century, a large variety of substitute roofing materials intended to simulate a historic material, like slate or terra cotta, have been developed. Some are more successful than others in appearance and performance.

The VCC considers the existing roofing material and the property's color rating when evaluating the appropriateness of an alternate material. When reviewing a synthetic slate roof material, for example, the VCC compares its initial appearance and strength as well as how it weathers over time. Caution is recommended when considering substitute materials because they might not have the promised longevity.

The following sloped or pitched roofing materials are permissible in the Vieux Carré with VCC approval:

- Slate - Traditional
- Slate - Contemporary
- Clay tile
- Cement, slate-type or clay tile-type tiles
- Non-cement, synthetic slate-type or clay tile-type shingles
- Standing seam copper
- Standing seam painted metal (site-formed, not pre-manufactured)

The following flat or low-sloped roofing materials are permissible for few buildings in the Vieux Carré, typically limited to a commercial or industrial building:

- Flat seam copper or lead coated copper
- Built-up roofing, single-ply or multi-ply roofing

Torch-down application of roofing is not permitted due to the potential fire hazard.

Metal hangers often are used to secure dislodged slates or replace individual slates.

SLATE

A slate roof can last 60 to 150 years depending on the roof slope, stone properties, configuration, installation quality and regularity of maintenance. Failing slate slowly delaminates, chips and absorbs moisture, causing deterioration to accelerate over time. Problems with a slate roof are typically the result of a localized failure because many of the roof accessories and fasteners do not have the same 100-plus year life span as the slate itself. To extend the serviceable life of a slate roof, the property owners are encouraged to address a localized problem as it becomes apparent, using a qualified slate roofer.

Typical localized problems and possible repairs for a slate roof include:

- Loose or corroding fasteners for slate or an accessory – *Reattach or replace fasteners or install slate hanger*
- Splitting or cracking slate – *Install sheet metal under slate and fill split or hole with roofing cement or replace slate*
- Missing or damaged slate or a roof accessory – *Replace to match original*

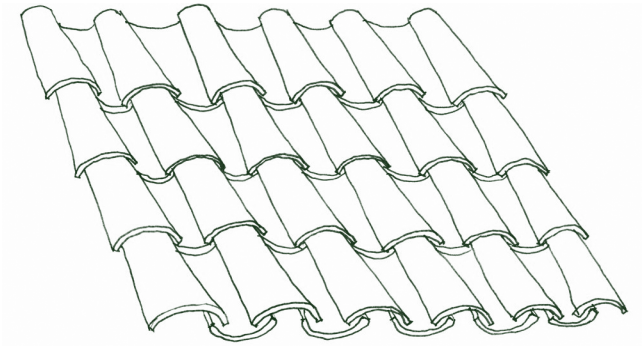
If over 20% of the roof slates are damaged or missing, replacement of the roofing might be warranted, although the property owner is strongly encouraged to make every attempt to match the quality, color, size, thickness and decorative pattern with replacement slates. **For the greatest longevity, care should be used when selecting appropriate quality nails and flashing for new or replacement slate roofing.** (Refer to *Flashing*, page 04-8.)

Slate Roof Review	
Replace with traditional slate of same quality, color and size as existing; Remove any non-tile roofing and install slate roof	
1 2 3	Staff
Install slate that is not traditional or of same quality, color and size as existing	
1 Purple	Commission
1 Blue 2 3	Architectural Committee
Remove slate roof and install other roofing material	
1 2 3	Commission

The terra cotta at this roof includes a green glaze. Also note that speciality shapes are used along the ridge cap and hips, and exposed metal flashing is located in the valley.

TILE

A tile roof, which includes terra cotta and concrete tiles, can last over 100 years depending on the material's properties, the manufacturing process, installation quality and regularity of maintenance. Terra cotta roofs are not common in the French Quarter, but can be found as the primary roofing material on Spanish Colonial period buildings and some shotguns. (Refer to *Ridge Caps or Tiles, Cresting & Finials,* page 04-9.) Similar to slate, a tile roof can have problems that are typically the result of a localized failure because many roof accessories and fasteners do not have the same 100-year life span as the tile itself. In addition, tiles are relatively fragile and susceptible to damage if dropped or impacted by a falling tree limb.



Terra cotta tile provides a distinctive roof finish that is weather and fire resistant. Spanish tiles are rounded and installed in an overlapping pattern.

Historically, terra cotta tiles were available in a variety of shapes, including plain rectangular tiles, as shown above, similar in form to slate.

To extend the serviceable life of a tile roof, the property owner is encouraged to address a localized problem as it becomes apparent, using a qualified roofer.

Typical localized problems and possible repairs for a tile roof include:

- Loose or corroding fasteners for tiles or an accessory – *Reattach or replace fasteners*
- Cracking tile – *Install sheet metal under tile, fill split or reattach dislodged piece with tinted roofing cement*
- Missing or damaged tile or a roof accessory – *Replace to match original, preferably with salvaged units with the same dimensions and similar visual characteristics*

If over 20% of the tiles on a roof slope are damaged or missing, replacement of the roofing might be warranted. The property owner will be required to match decorative shapes, patterns and colors with the replacement materials. Other materials simulate terra cotta, concrete and other tiles, but many do not have the same dimensional characteristics of the historic material or have not been available commercially for very long. Often it is possible to reuse salvaged tiles taking care to verify availability of appropriate quantities of needed sizes, shapes and colors. In addition, mortar can be installed between tiles to minimize potential wind uplift during a storm. **For the greatest longevity, care should be used when selecting appropriate quality nails and flashing for new tile roofing.** (Refer to *Flashing*, page 04-8.)

Terra Cotta & Concrete Tile Roof Review	
Replace with traditional tile of same quality, color and size as existing	
1 **2** **3**	Staff
Install tile that is not traditional or of same quality, color and size as existing	
1 *Purple*	Commission
1 *Blue* **2** **3**	Architectural Committee
Remove tile roof and install other roofing material	
1 **2** **3**	Commission

METAL

Metal was popularized for roofing after sheet metal production expanded in the mid-19th century. It is found on commercial and industrial buildings, as well as residences and service buildings. Traditional sheet metals for roofing include lead, copper, zinc, tin plate, terne plate and galvanized iron. Many metal roofs that are not copper or lead-coated copper require regular painting to minimize the potential for corrosion. (Refer to *Metal Roof Color*, page 04-5.)

On a shallow pitch roof like a gallery, porch, abat-vent, cupola or dome, small rectangular pieces of flat seam metal roofing were installed with edges crimped together and soldered to form a weather-tight surface. On a steeper pitched roof, long continuous seams were used, typically in a standing seam configuration, with regular ridges down a roof slope. Corrugated or other paneled metal roofing is found on commercial and industrial buildings and service buildings, such as a shed and garage.

Deterioration of the metal surface tends to result from natural wear of the protective painted or galvanized surface, chemical action, rusting, pitting or streaking, airborne pollutants, rain or material acids, and/or galvanic action. **Galvanic action occurs when dissimilar metals chemically react against each other and corrode, which can occur from adjacent metals, such as fasteners, and non-adjacent metals, such as roof cresting and gutters via rainwater.**

If the roof is generally rusting, splitting, pitted, severely buckled or warped, or many of the seams or edges are open or disfigured, replacement of the roofing might be warranted. If considering replacement, the seam patterns and color must match the replacement material.

Typical localized problems and possible repairs for a metal roof include:

- Wearing paint, galvanizing or coating – *Repaint*
- Slipping sheet or panel; open seam or solder joint – *Refasten and/or re-solder*
- Rust, perforation and/or puncture – *Replace to match original*

For a low-sloped or flat roof, copper sheets can be soldered together for a weather-tight surface.

Sheet metal such as copper may be formed in a variety of shapes with different patterns. This entrance hood will naturally acquire a patina, turning green over time.

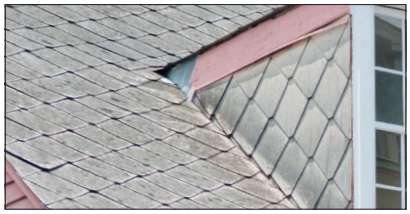
Metal Roof Color

Metal roof colors in the French Quarter tend to be uncoated copper or galvanized metal or, if a painted finish, the colors are similar to metal, such as silver to grey or muted green. Regionally, red metal roofs are more commonly found in agricultural settings and are generally not appropriate within the French Quarter. **Please note that a VCC permit is required for metal roofing color.**

Metal Roof Review	
Replace in-kind with metal roof of same material, color and design as existing	
1 2 3	Staff
Install corrugated metal roofing on a former warehouse or secondary building such as a service building, small garage, small structure or shed	
1	Architectural Committee
2 3	Staff
Replace copper roof with another material; Install standing seam metal roof where it did not exist historically	
1 2	Commission
3	Architectural Committee
Install 5-V crimp, rib panel or r-panel metal roofing where is did not exist historically; Remove historic metal roof and install other roof material	
1 2 3	Commission

ABAT-VENT

An abat-vent is a roof extension, almost flat, supported by metal or wood outriggers cantilevered from the façade at the roof line. They protect a building wall and window and door openings from the elements and provide shelter for pedestrians along the sidewalk.



Asbestos roofing is often recognizable by its diamond pattern, although rectangular shingles were also available.

ASBESTOS

Asbestos became a popular roofing material at the beginning of the 20th century. Asbestos roofing is made from asbestos mineral fibers and either Portland or hydraulic cement and provides a durable, lightweight, economical, fireproof, rot and termite resistant alternative to slate, terra cotta and corrugated metal roofing. With appropriate maintenance, an asbestos shingle roof can be expected to last well over 30 years, with shingle cracking and rusting nails being the most typical causes of failure.

Although the manufacturing of asbestos roofing ceased when asbestos was banned by the EPA in 1973, the VCC does not require the removal of existing asbestos roofing that continues to provide a watertight roof surface. If the roofing is damaged, consultation with a certified professional to determine the feasibility of repair is recommended.

Typical localized problems and possible repairs for asbestos shingle include:

- Splitting or puncturing – *Install sheet metal under shingle, fill split or hole with grout of Portland cement and water*
- Loosening or corroding of fasteners for asbestos shingle or an accessory – *Reattach or replace fasteners*
- Moss, algae or fungi growing on surface – *Trim back adjacent tree limbs to allow sun to dry out roof surface*
- Missing or eroding shingles or roof accessory – *Replace shingles with non-asbestos shingles to match original and roof accessory in-kind*

If over 20% of the asbestos shingles on a roof slope are damaged or missing, replacement of the roofing might be warranted. Alternative replacement roofing materials appropriate for the building type and architectural style can include slate, terra cotta tile, metal or simulated slate or terra cotta. Consultation with VCC Staff is recommended.

Asbestos Roof Review

Remove asbestos roof and install other roof material
1 **2** **3** Staff

ASBESTOS SAFETY

Great care should be taken when working with or removing an asbestos product. All asbestos related work should be undertaken by a licensed contractor. (Refer to *Safety Precautions, Guidelines for Exterior Maintenance,* page 03-16.) The property owner is responsible for ensuring that all asbestos removal and disposal is handled in accordance with applicable regulations and procedures.

FLAT ROOFING SYSTEMS

Although very few roofs are truly "flat", a low-sloped roof is generally defined as pitched below a 3:12 slope (a 3-inch rise for a 12-inch run) and requires a watertight roofing system. There are a variety of flat or low-slope roof systems such as: metal roofing, built-up roofing, single-ply roofing and modified bitumen roofing. In contrast, a steeper pitched roof system generally employs shingles, in a material such as slate or terra cotta, to shed storm water.

Typical localized problems for a flat roof system include:

- Split, puncture, perforation or cracking of surface – *Install temporary patch compatible with roof material*
- Standing water or poor drainage – *Verify roof slopes to drain and drain is clear and below the roof level*

In selecting the most appropriate roofing material, it is important to verify that the design addresses the building's drainage and the specific details of existing conditions, including attachment, substrate and weight limitations. The property owner should be aware that white, very light and/or highly reflective coatings are not permitted in the Vieux Carré, nor are torch-down applications due to the potential fire hazard. Other factors to consider when installing a new roof include maintenance requirements, anticipated life span in New Orleans' climate and hurricane resistance.

Flat Roof Review

Install a new flat or low-sloped roof
1 **2** **3** Staff

PARAPET

A parapet is the portion of a wall that projects above an adjacent roof surface.

The central arch of this parapet with the decorative round gable end window likely conceals a gable roof.

CORNICE

A cornice includes the projecting horizontal moldings toward the top of the building wall.

This cornice includes dentils, spaced small blocks, below the top molding. A significant crack extends through the cornice above the right window. The built-in gutter discharges into the copper scupper box to the left. The presence of plants suggests water in the wall.

DORMERS

A dormer, also known as a dormer window, protrudes from a gable or hipped roof surface with a window providing light and additional headroom where the roof is steep enough to accommodate habitable space. A dormer can have various roof shapes, but in the French Quarter they are typically gabled or occasionally arched, and approximately 4-feet in width. The overall height of a historic dormer is determined by the style of the associated windows, but usually not tall enough to accommodate a double-hung egress window.

Property owners are encouraged to retain existing historic dormers and reconstruct a dormer on a building where there is clear documentary evidence that one previously existed. When considering a new dormer, particularly on a historic building, the property owner is encouraged to consider comparable buildings of the same style and period including location, form, spacing, dimensions, proportions, style and detailing. For example, a dormer is typically not appropriate on a side elevation roof slope.

Dormer cheek wall, or side wall, cladding materials vary with building materials. **On a masonry building, dormer cheek walls should be slate unless the roof is metal, in which case they may be metal. On a wood-frame building, dormer cheek walls may be slate or wood.**

This dormer has a defined pediment, a triangular gable end, reminiscent of classical detailing. One slate is missing at the cheek wall, or side wall, and should be replaced.

Dormer Review	
Reconstruct previously existing dormer - Must provide photographic evidence of previous dormer and scaled drawings	
1 2 3	Staff
Install new dormer - Must provide scaled drawings	
1 2	Commission
3	Architectural Committee

These chimneys have "Bishop Cap" tops formed with bricks.

CHIMNEYS

Chimneys were designed to complement the style of a building and period of construction. In the French Quarter, most are constructed of brick, some of which have been covered by stucco. Most often, they are located within the building wall rather than attached to an exterior wall, and oriented with the narrow side facing the front elevation. The rhythm and placement of one or more chimneys reflect the building's internal organization and represent an important architectural feature.

Most building types and styles in the French Quarter, including Creole cottages, shotguns and Greek Revival buildings, have square or rectangular chimney shafts, sometimes with molded tops, often covered with an inverted "V" shaped cap making them weather-resistant. Victorian period chimneys can have decorative detailing including corbelling, varied patterns, undulating or molded surfaces, or decorative terra cotta chimney pots. **The VCC approves the removal of a historic chimney only if it is structurally deficient.** A new metal chimney flue should be clad in brick or other material to conceal the flue and provide a historically appropriate appearance.

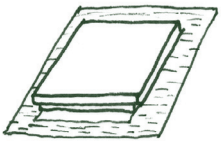
Chimney with "V" cap (left), and terra cotta chimney pots (right).

Chimney Review	
Reconstruct historically appropriate chimney	
1 2 3	Staff
Remove or construct chimney	
1 2	Commission
3	Architectural Committee

ROOF VENTS

Roof vents are installed to allow for the escape of heat from an attic space; to expel smoke, sewer or other noxious gas; to supply fresh air intake for equipment such as a gas-fired appliance; or to provide restaurant cooking ventilation. Roof vents, as shown in the examples below, are located at the roof ridge and allow hot attic air to escape, greatly reducing heat in the building interior during the summer.

Chinese Cap
Most appropriate on ridge of a gabled or hipped roof building



Power Roof Vent
Approved only for a less visible location and not on a slate or tile roof

Turbine Ventilator
Not appropriate – May only be installed as a replacement in-kind

Ridge Vent
Not appropriate

A commercial vent for the release of gases or fresh air intake for equipment tends to be a simple pipe, no more than 4-inches in diameter and 12-inches above the roof height, without a cap or mechanical fan system.

A restaurant ventilation system removes exhaust from cooking and associated equipment. The installation a of restaurant ventilation system is subject to building code requirements as well as VCC approval. **Restaurant vents and exhausts should be installed within the building envelope in a location where they are not visible from the public right-of-way, an occupied courtyard or a neighboring property.** All sound associated with an exhaust system should be kept to a minimum.

Roof Ventilation System & Flashing Review
Install small roof vent no more than 4-inches in diameter; Replace a Chinese cap in-kind; Install flashing 1 2 3 Staff
Install any other roof vent 1 2 3 Architectural Committee

The restaurant vent (left) is located within the building envelope; however, it is visually prominent and, therefore, not appropriate. The turbine ventilator (right) is also not appropriate in the Vieux Carré.

FLASHING

Flashing typically is made of thin sheet metal formed to prevent water from entering a building at a joint or intersection or where the pitch changes. It is installed around chimneys, parapets, dormer windows, roof valleys, vents and intersections of porches, galleries, additions or projecting windows. Flashing often fails before the roofing material, resulting in interior leaking, particularly with more durable roofing such as slate or tile. If the flashing deteriorates, it is possible for a qualified roofer to replace it without replacing the entire roof.

When replacing flashing or installing a new roof, it is important to select a flashing material that has an anticipated life span similar or longer than the roofing. Copper, terne, steel, lead, and aluminum are all used for flashing. The longevity of each material is based upon its thickness, its propensity for deterioration from environmental conditions, and whether it is galvanized, treated or coated. Generally, copper or lead-coated copper has the longest life span, followed by stainless steel, with aluminum being highly susceptible to puncturing, tearing and galvanic reaction with other metals and some roofing materials. It is important to verify that flashing materials are sympathetic and compatible with existing roofing materials, including fasteners, to prevent long-term deterioration.

Newly installed, stepped copper flashing is located along the juncture of the parapet with the adjacent wall.

Terra cotta ridge caps are located along the roof hips and top ridge. The five chimneys are topped by inverted "V" caps. Their placement reflects the historic internal organization of rooms within the residence. Also note the Chinese cap roof vents, which help to cool the attic in warm weather.

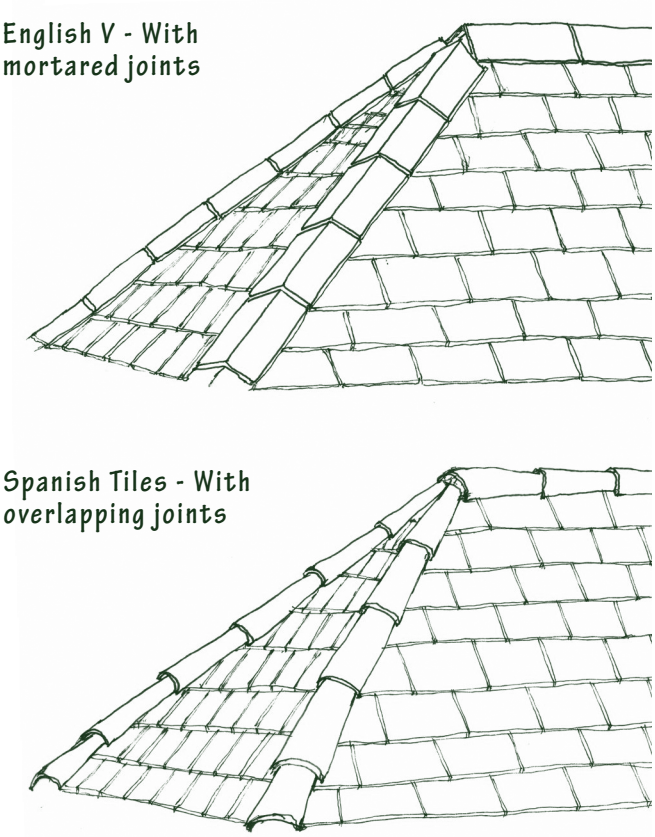
ROOF FEATURES & ACCESSORIES

Roof features are functional and sometimes a decorative element that help define the profile of a roof against the skyline and should complement the building's style. Historic rooftop features include ridge caps, cresting, finials, roof vents, flashing, gutters, downspouts, chimneys, dormers, weather vanes, bell towers and monitors. More recent additions include skylights, mechanical and television equipment and solar panels. When reviewing the approrpiateness of a new roof feature or accessory, the VCC considers its appropriateness to the building, existing roof features and accessories, the level of visibility, as well as disruption to the roof character and appearance. A property owner considering installation of a new roof feature or accessory should make every effort to minimize its visibility and the appearance of clutter to improve the likelihood of approval.

Decorative cresting and finials are often made from terra cotta. A Chinese cap and louvered vent provide attic ventilation.

Ridge Caps or Tiles, Cresting & Finials

A variety of building types and styles in the French Quarter feature ridge caps or tiles, cresting and finials, especially on a sloped slate, terra cotta or asbestos roof. They are visually important features, accentuating changes in roof slopes, and the VCC encourages their retention. The most prevalent ridge caps are those made from terra cotta, in either overlapping barrel forms or in an English-V with mortared joints. Typically, ridge caps are located along a top ridge or hip of a roof and cover the intersection where two roof slopes meet. Cresting is also located along the ridge at the upper portion of a roof. In the French Quarter, cresting is typically terra cotta, although cast iron is found at high Victorian buildings. Finials are often found at the end of a gable roof form or dormer.



Ridge tiles on a slate roof are often in an English-V profile with mortar between adjoining tiles (top) or in overlapping Spanish tiles (above).

Ridge Tile, Finial & Cresting Review	
Replace historically appropriate ridge tiles, cresting or finials	
1 2	Architectural Committee
3	Staff
Remove or install ridge tiles, cresting or finials	
1 2	Commission
3	Architectural Committee

Skylights

Historic skylights are occasionally found at a warehouse or commercial building. A skylight can dramatically alter the appearance of a roof. Therefore, an appropriate location for a new skylight is fairly limited. Occasionally, a skylight is approved for a shotgun or townhouse, on a roof slope where it can be visually minimized or on a low-sloped or flat roof where it will be concealed behind a parapet.

If a new skylight is approved to be installed on a sloped roof building, it may be fixed or operational. It should be installed in a manner that:

- Minimizes its visibility from all location
- Minimizes changes to existing roof framing, generally with the long dimension running down the roof slope, at least 12-inches below the roof ridge
- Minimizes the number of skylights, such that it comprises a maximum amount of 3-percent of a roof slope, and is arranged in an orderly fashion
- Runs parallel to, and no more than 8-inches above the plane of the roof surface; has clear or tinted glazing for a dark exterior appearance and has the exterior framing painted or colored to match the roof material
- Does not have a domed, angled or other raised feature

These skylights have a low profile and are located at least 12-inches below the top of this standing seam copper roof.

Roof Hatches

A roof hatch is similar in form to a skylight but instead of glazing, it has a solid removable or hinged cover that allows access to the roof. A roof hatch should be installed so that it is not visible from the street and its visibility is minimized from any location. It should also be located at least 12-inches below the roof ridge, parallel to and no more than 8-inches above the plane of the roof surface, and have either a copper finish or a finish painted to match the roof material.

A roof hatch should be as small as possible, no more than 8-inches above the plane of the roof, run parallel to the roof slope and finished to match the roof color.

This roof monitor is located along the roof ridge and includes a continuous row of windows.

Roof Monitors & Cupolas

A roof monitor and a cupola are structures that project up from the roof, and are used for ventilation with louvers, lookouts or windows. Monitors are found historically on warehouse buildings. Property owners are encouraged to retain them. A new roof monitor or cupola is rarely appropriate on a historic building, but may be acceptable on new construction.

While a roof monitor is generally rectangular and located along the roof ridge, a cupola tends to be round, square or octagonal, as in this example.

Weather Vanes & Lightning Rods

A weather vane is typically a decorative metal device mounted on a roof with a vertical rod and horizontal arm that rotates with the blowing wind. A lightning rod directs lightning harmlessly to the ground. Property owners are encouraged to retain historic weather vanes and lightning rods.

PREFERRED LOCATIONS FOR NEW ROOF FEATURES & ACCESSORIES

The VCC encourages the placement of all contemporary roof objects so they are least disruptive to the roof character and appearance and minimally visible from all locations. This includes a skylight, roof hatch and all forms of mechanical, television and telephone equipment.

In addition, when locating a new contemporary object on a roof, the property owner is encouraged to consider the location of existing roof features, accessories and objects to minimize the appearance of clutter.

This roof includes a visible air compressor unit and two television dishes. Roof mounted equipment should be located to minimize visibility from all locations.

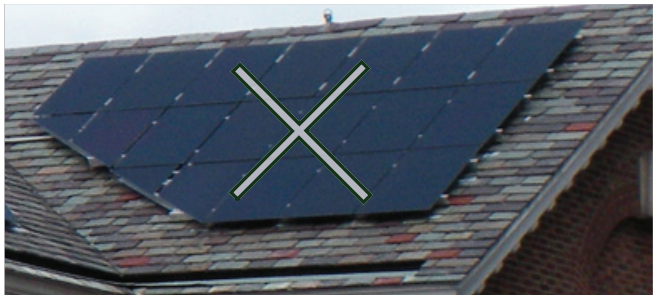
Roof Mounted Equipment

Roof mounted equipment including mechanical equipment, generators, vents, television and mobile telecommunication equipment are all examples of modern inventions and roof penetrations that can adversely affect the silhouette and historic integrity of a building. Although it is understood that some roof penetrations are required, for example for a plumbing vent, the property owner is encouraged to limit the amount of rooftop equipment and number of penetrations in order to minimize the overall appearance of clutter.

Whenever possible, equipment should be located to be visually unobtrusive, typically on a rear slope of a roof surface or concealed behind a parapet.

The installation of rooftop mechanical equipment, such as an air conditioner compressor unit, generator or similar equipment, is not permitted where it will be visibly obtrusive. Every effort should be made to shield the equipment from view and minimize associated noise. The installation of a satellite dish, mobile telecommunication equipment or similar equipment is not allowed where it is visible from any other property. (For additional information regarding air conditioner compressors and generators, refer to *Mounted Equipment, Guidelines for Site Elements & Courtyards*, page 10-11.)

The visibility of mechanical equipment should be minimized and located to least disrupt the appearance of the historic building, streetscape and District.



Contemporary solar collectors tend to be visually obtrusive and incompatible with historic roof materials and are rarely appropriate in the Vieux Carré.

Solar Collectors

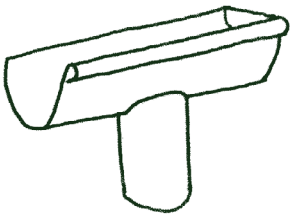
A solar collector provides a renewable energy source by converting the sun's rays into electricity. In considering the appropriateness of a solar collector in the historic context of the French Quarter, the VCC has weighed the appearance of currently available options with the rapid advancements in solar technology and has come to the conclusion that contemporary products are not appropriate when viewed in the District's historic context.

The current policy of the VCC is that a solar collector can not be installed in a location that is visible from a public or habitable space within the Vieux Carré. Therefore, if the proposed location of a solar collector will be visible from the street or sidewalk, any window or habitable level of a gallery or balcony, the installation will not be approvable.

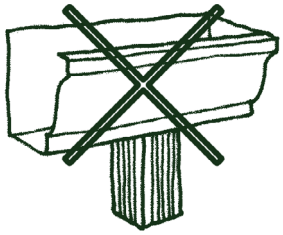
It is understood that this technology is changing rapidly and, as a result, the visual obtrusiveness and high reflectivity of solar collectors are declining. As advancements in the development of more appropriate options become available, the VCC will revisit this policy over time.

This solar collector is highly reflective making it more noticeable and visually dominant on the roof surface.

Skylight; Roof Hatch; Roof Monitor; Cupola; Weather Vane; Lightning Rod; Roof Mounted Equipment & Solar Collector Review	
Install a new visually unobtrusive air conditioner compressor unit or generator	
1 **2**	Commission
3	Architectural Committee
Install a new skylight, roof hatch, roof monitor, cupola, a lightning rod or weather vane, other mounted equipment, or a solar collector	
1 **2** **3**	Commission



Half-Round Gutter with a Round Downspout



K-Style Gutter with a Corrugated Downspout

The "K-Style" gutter and corrugated downspout is visually obtrusive and not appropriate in the Vieux Carré.

GUTTERS

A gutter is located near or along the bottom edge of a roof slope to collect rainwater. Although many French Quarter buildings were not designed with any gutters, installing them can significantly reduce water damage to a building's walls, foundation and piers. A built-in gutter is often not visible from the ground, and typically is within or behind an architectural feature such as a cornice or parapet. A pole gutter is located near the bottom edge of a roof slope and projects perpendicularly to the roof surface. Both built-in gutters and pole gutters are formed of flashing materials, wrapped around or within a wood form.

A hanging gutter is located just under the roof slope edge and usually is metal with a half-round or profiled cross section. Gutter materials have different life spans. Generally, copper has the longest potential life span, followed by steel, with aluminum being highly susceptible to puncturing, tearing, denting and galvanic reaction to other metals. When installing or reinstalling a gutter, the property owner should reproduce any special or historic molding, strap or bracket used to attach the original gutter to the building and repair or replace wood eave detailing and trim. (Refer to *Wood Trim & Ornament, Guidelines for Exterior Woodwork,* page 05-4.)

Gutter & Downspout Review	
Replace an existing copper gutter or downspout with a half-round gutter or plain round or rectangular downspout	
1 **2** **3**	Staff
Install a new copper or galvanized metal half-round gutter or plain round or rectangular downspout	
1 **2** **3**	Architectural Committee
Install any other gutter or downspout; Remove a cast iron boot	
1 **2**	Commission
3	Architectural Committee

A decorative cast iron boot should be retained.

DOWNSPOUTS

A downspout, also known as rainwater conductor, is generally surface mounted to a building's exterior to conduct a gutter's water down the face of the building to the ground or an underground drainage system via a cast iron boot. Similar to a gutter, a downspout can be fabricated of copper, galvanized metal or aluminum with similar characteristics, in a round or rectangular profile. An advantage of a galvanized metal downspout is that it can be painted to match the building.

When adding a downspout to a structure for the first time, it should be arranged in an orderly fashion and mounted to the building rather than to a gallery or porch post or column.

KEEP IN MIND...

- Roofing work is potentially dangerous and should be left to professionals
- **All roofers are not experienced in all materials** – Obtain references and verify that the roofer has appropriately completed comparable work
- Verify roofer is experienced in meeting VCC requirements and will obtain required approvals and permits
- Verify the extent of both the material and installation warranties and manufacturer's and installer's histories
- Verify whether removal of existing roofing is required before installing new roofing; too much weight can damage a building's structural elements
- Use fasteners appropriate for hurricane-force winds and of quality to provide the greatest longevity for slate or tile installation
- Inspect attic periodically after storms to catch small leaks early minimizing potential interior damage
- Inspect the condition of underlying materials for rot or decay and make necessary repairs, including to sheathing, lath and structural elements such as a rafter or wall plate
- Install a gutter or downspout to maintain existing eave conditions and – regularly clean gutters and downspouts, typically every spring and fall

This material is funded by the Vieux Carré Commission Foundation on behalf of the Vieux Carré Commission.
www.nola.gov/vcc

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New Orleans, LA. www.vccfoundation.org
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